

# City of Union News Letter

"Promote rural values, protect local assets and foster community pride"

**City of Union**  
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**CITY HALL HOURS:** Monday thru Thursday  
10:00 am - 5:00 pm - Open during lunch

Union Carnegie Public Library  
Mon 10:30am - 6:00pm Thurs 1:00pm - 6:00pm  
Tue 10:00am - 5:30pm Fri 9:00am - 3:30pm  
Wed 4:00pm - 8:00pm

September 2015



## How is the City Water Quality Now?

Last month, the City learned that some of the water samples from the City water system tested positive for coliform bacteria. This is a harmless bacteria that is present all around us. Regulations provide that the system can have no more than one (1) positive coliform bacteria test per month. The City had more than one (1) positive test, which violated a drinking water standard and triggered additional sampling requirements, consumer notification, and an aggressive approach by the City Public Works staff to correct the problem. A **"Boil Water" order was not issued** as there was no health risk from the presence of the harmless coliform bacteria.

City staff speculate that the cause for the coliform bacteria presence was the result of the extreme hot weather at the beginning of June coupled with inadequate turnover of fresh water in the distribution system and storage reservoir. Steps taken by the City staff to correct this problem included temporarily increasing the level of disinfection of the water supply, flushing the water distribution system through the fire hydrants, and draining and replacing water in the storage reservoir.

Samples from the water system tested the first week of August showed **no** coliform bacteria present. The City water system and supply is now back in compliance with Safe Drinking Water Rules.

## Upcoming Street Improvements

Streets planned for major maintenance/repair work yet this fall include West Dearborn Street, East Fir Street, West Beakman, and West Arch Street. Areas planned for this work have been marked with white paint. The actual amount of maintenance work that we may be able to accomplish may be less than all of the street sections that have been marked. The maintenance/repair work to be performed depends on the condition of the pavement and may include, skin patching, grinding and reconstruction, widening, chip seal, seal coat, crack sealing, intersection returns, structure adjustment, and grading along the edges of the repaired streets to improve drainage. Residents along the streets impacted by these projects will be notified prior to commencement of the schedule for the work.



Union County Public Transit is accepting public comment on proposed service changes in Union. A stakeholder meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2015 at 2:00 pm at Union City Hall.

Meeting materials are available online at:

[www.neotransit.org/public-comment](http://www.neotransit.org/public-comment)

Public comment may be left online at the same site through October 6, 2015.

“The world is changed by those who show up...”



Welcome...

Cycle Oregon Will Be Riding Through!

September 19th

They will be stopping for a break in Union before moving on.

Let's make them feel welcome!



## From The Fire Chief....

The Pacific Northwest is currently experiencing fire danger not seen in recent memory and weather forecasts don't provide any relief. The abundant spring rains have made forest fuels at record levels. Wildfires in Oregon and Washington remain the nation's top priority with 24 large fires that have burned at least 1,052,388 acres (as of August 24, 2015)

This many fires make the air thick with smoke! Health officials say it's serious and you need to pay close attention to the air quality. Air quality is at an extremely unhealthy range over much of Eastern Oregon. The elderly and those with underlying health problems can be especially sensitive, and should stay indoors as much as possible. Small children are also a special concern right now. Precautions should be taken for children because their lungs are still developing, and they breathe twice as much air as an adult.

Take a few minutes and check in with the elderly and those with respiratory health problems, whether it is a family member or your neighbor.

Quote of the month.....

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world....

*Nelson Mandela*

## New Face at City Hall...

Hi, my name is Tanya Freeman. I started working at the city on August 10<sup>th</sup>, filling the part-time position of utility clerk.



My husband, daughter and I moved to Union from Paso Robles CA. While living in California we owned an automotive repair shop for over 28 years. However our family has always craved a simpler, slower pace, down home country feeling where you can have a horse in your back yard and people say "Hi" when you pass them on the street.

While visiting family in Cove over the past couple of years we discovered you can indeed find places such as this. We began looking to buy a home in the area this past fall and in March of this year we found a lovely home here in Union.

I have enjoyed working at City Hall this past month and meeting many of its residents. I look forward to meeting more of you, becoming involved in the community, and getting settled in the "lovely little spot on the map."

## Want to get Meeting Notices!

Send your email to [admin@cityofunion.com](mailto:admin@cityofunion.com) and request to be placed on the meeting notice list. Or like City of Union, Oregon on Facebook.



## Please Help Stop the Spread and Proliferation of This Especially Noxious Weed

There is a villain lurking about our fine City. Maybe you have seen him or had a nasty encounter. His name is *tribulus terrestris* or as he is more commonly known as goathead, Mexican sandbur, Texas sandbur, puncture vine, etc. Whatever you call it, this is one nasty hombre.

The plants seem to have really bolted in the last few weeks. There are all sizes, from little rosettes up to sprawling, thorny, monsters. Once established it is very difficult to eradicate. The seeds are reported to remain viable in the ground for years and some lay in the ground waiting for the right conditions to promote sprouting and growth.

The plant is spread by the thorns hitchhiking in animal fur or hooves, tires, clothing, shoes, farming equipment, construction equipment and even when trying to eradicate the plants using mechanical methods. Disturbing the ground can start an infestation. The only way to effectively control and hopefully eradicate an infestation is through the use of herbicides, mechanical removal, or biological control (weevils). At this late time of summer, mature plants should be mechanically removed using care to avoid dislodging the thorns. The smaller rosette plants can be treated with a recommended herbicide. Please join in the fight to eradicate this extremely obnoxious weed.

The most important thing we can do is be persistent. It can take years to eliminate this noxious weed. For more information and photographs check out the following link at the

Oregon State University Extension Service web site

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/node/958>.



## City Launches Facebook Page



The City of Union has launched a new Facebook page as part of its ongoing effort to enhance communications and transparency in the community. City Council last February during their goal setting session recognized this particular form of media as being important to local citizens.

Council knows the value of this popular tool in the digital age and feel the city's new Facebook page constitutes a real step forward towards reaching out and engaging the community outside of the other methods already used.

In addition to posting news and announcements and that ever so often emergency, each city department can now also regularly contribute content to the city of Union's Facebook page as an additional communications tool. Facebook users will be able to read, like, share and comment on city posts.

The city hopes to make this a fun, informative, interactive site to help communicate and celebrate Union's events, activities, meetings and achievements. With so many of us relying on social media to stay informed, we're excited to offer this additional communication platform to the community.

### ~TOWN HALL MEETING~

#### **Wastewater Treatment Facility – Required Upgrades**

Currently the City is facing the need to make major improvements to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and disposal system in order to comply with future, more stringent, Catherine Creek water quality standards. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) sets water quality standards to protect beneficial uses. The State standards must be approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Establishment of water quality standards for a stream or river is a complex process that evolves over time as aquatic impacts from pollutants become better understood. At this time, the two (2) water quality standards that are driving the need to upgrade the wastewater treatment system are temperature and ammonia. These water quality parameters will be measured at the end of the pipe as the treated effluent discharges to the creek. With the present WWTP design and configuration, the City would not be able to meet proposed treated effluent discharge limits (quality) for creek discharge.

The City Council has determined that the best course of action for the community is to stop discharging to Catherine Creek altogether. Water quality standards for Catherine Creek are expected to become even more stringent in the future which could trigger additional WWTP improvements should the City continue to discharge to the stream. The improvement alternative that was selected by the Council was to discontinue discharge to Catherine Creek by continuing the present plant operation, constructing storage lagoons, maintain the golf course irrigation, and secure additional cropland to irrigate with the remaining treated wastewater effluent not used at Buffalo Peak.

An invitation to apply for funding for the project through the Business Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) has been received by the City. Of all the funding options available, the City Council selected this option as being in the best long term interest of the citizens. A town hall meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Leonard Almquist Council Chambers, Union City Hall on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 to explain the project need, the project, and potential cost impacts.

#### **Planning Commissioner Wanted**

City of Union Planning Commission has one open seat. City provides training, in return you need to be committed to meeting one night a month, the third Wednesday of the month at 7 pm.

The Planning Commission holds public hearings, review applications and make recommendations as set forth in city code. Review and make recommendations on proposed amendments to zoning, subdivision and transportation provisions and to the comprehensive plan.

If you are interested please complete a volunteer form. For more information call Sandra Patterson at 541-562-5197.



## The Deer Survey Results Are In!

The survey included in the July 2015 newsletter asked the question, "Should the City Administration pursue lethal and non-lethal means to reduce deer numbers with the City limits of Union." Leonard Erickson, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Biologist for the Northeast region in La Grande had asked that the City establish whether or not the citizens of Union supported reducing deer numbers in the community so that the Agency is confident there is community support such a program. According to Erickson, the ODFW started to implement a deer number reduction program in another community where the Agency believed the community supported reducing deer numbers, only to have the efforts met with strong citizen objection. The purpose of this report was to determine if the residents of the City of Union would support an ODFW program to reduce deer numbers in the City.

Responses to the survey have stopped coming in now. To date we have received 198 responses on reducing deer numbers. Those respondents in favor of reducing deer numbers represented 121 (61%) of the responses. Respondents opposed to any program to control deer numbers represented 77 (39%) of the responses. Less than 10 percent of those responding to the survey who favored reducing deer numbers indicated that the reduction should occur by non-lethal means. The results of the survey are available in the front office of City Hall for examination.

The City Council will hold a work session with the ODFW to discuss deer number reduction options. The date and time will be announced later and will be posted on our facebook page.

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

If you would like to advertise your monthly event or activity email [cityhall@cityofunion.com](mailto:cityhall@cityofunion.com) or call 541-562-5197.

ORGANIZATION	MEETING DATE	LOCATION	TIME	PHONE
Booster Club Meeting			6:00 pm	
City of Union Chamber	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues of the month	See Nick @ Union Drug	12:30	<a href="http://www.visitunionor.org">www.visitunionor.org</a>
City Council	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mon of the month	City Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5197
CUP Medical Association	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed of the month	Health Clinic	6:15 pm	541-562-5441
CUP Senior Assisted Living	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursdays	Union Drug Co.	6:00 pm	541-562-5441
Order of Eastern Star	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed of the month	Masonic Hall	7:30 pm	541-805-0779
EMS Department	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon of the month	Rural Fire Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5660
EOLS Board	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tues of the month	EOLS Club House	7:30 pm	541-562-5631
Food Bank	3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month	First Baptist Church	10-noon	541-562-5531
Friends of the Library	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month	Union Library	7:00 pm	541-562-5807
Library Board	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed of the month	Library	4:00 pm	541-562-5811
Lions Club	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed of the month	Union Library	5:30 pm	541-562-5685
Municipal Court	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed/every quarter	City Hall	5:30 pm	541-562-5197
Planning Commission	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed of the month	City Hall	7:00 pm	541-562-5197
Senior Lunch	Every Tuesday	Methodist Church	12:00 pm	541-562-5675
School Board	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed of the month	Athletic Complex	7:00 pm	541-562-5166
South County Health Dist	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues of the month	Health Clinic	7:00 pm	541-562-6180
TOPS	Every Wednesday	United Methodist Church	8:30 am	541-562-9009
VFW Bingo	Every Wednesday night	VFW Hall	5 pm	541-562-6035
VFW Formal meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of month	VFW Hall	7 pm	541-562-6035

